

The Stronghold of Protestantism

In welcoming you here, it is my privilege to welcome you to the great stronghold of Protestantism in Canada. Toronto is our Belfast. It is not only the great religious centre of this country, but is fast becoming, if it is not already, the commercial centre of the Dominion. Seldom do we see so many faithful young Protestants assembled in the interests of the cause of truth, liberty and charity, as are here to-day. I bid you one and all a hearty True Blue welcome. To some of us these meetings are no novelty, while others are here for the first time. We desire all to share freely in all the business coming before us, and to enjoy to their heart's content the hospitality of this grand body, the local sisters and brethren, and the City of Toronto.

In the glory of to-day I desire my fellow-officers to share. The part you played in bringing this year to a successful close is best known to yourselves, share with me the plaudits of this day, scan if you will the work you have assisted in accomplishing. Those who have kept step with their Grand Master in the years gone by can look to-day upon a record which in itself speaks volumes of praise to the whole army of faithful ones who have done their duty. William of glorious memory had his faithful officers, and so have we, and were I to single out a Schomberg among them it would be Bro. Nicholas Ingram, who never lets go, but plunges on even against the tides and undercurrents which threaten at times to sweep us off our feet. He is here to-day as general among generals, a man in whose hands the interests of our society have been faithfully preserved. We owe to him a debt of gratitude and our unwavering support. His advice and counsel we cannot safely pass unnoticed. He is in a position which gives him experience that must prove useful in planning the policy of our Association. His devotion to the cause, his ability in the office he occupies none can question. He has proved himself a true Secretary of State to your Grand Master in the solving of many knotty problems with which the society has successfully contended.

A parting word to you comes from the fulness of my heart. For no less than five years in succession you have chosen me as your Grand Master. The ties that bind me to you through this office are very tender, yet strong. My whole energy and best part of time during these years unreservedly have been applied to the cause which you entrusted to me. Had I relied upon my own judgment and legislated according to my own fancies, the years of success through which we have passed could not be the record of to-day. The unseen hand of Him in whom we trusted was with us. The advice of other officers and the popular voice of the marching column were heeded. The True Blue Society first, its success and stability, was my motto. Had it been otherwise I would not have been worthy of my trust, nor is any brother who would sacrifice the Order or lessen its standing worthy of the position of Grand Master. I shall ever look back upon the days spent in this office with no small degree of pride and with a sense of satisfaction. To be your unanimous choice year after year to the highest office is something which should fill any heart with joy. But dearer to me than office or honor is the welfare of the True Blue Association and the permanency of our Orphanage at Picton. Anything that would tend to weaken us in this regard would be to me a source